

## Careers guidance set to face challenging future



Pictures by Nick Linford

John Hayes, Minister for FE, Skills and Lifelong Learning and Ruth Spellman, Chair of the Careers Profession Alliance speaking at the Institute of Career Guidance (ICG) Annual Conference See page 2

## Free vocational training for adults criticised

**FE Week Exclusive**

**Nick Summers**

@SummersNicholas

### Association of Employment and Learning Providers calls on employers to contribute

Employers and learners should pay more towards apprenticeships, according to Graham Hoyle.

Mr Hoyle, Chief Executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), says the government should only be paying for the basic skills, and employers should think of apprenticeships as a valuable investment.

"The government has to articulate what it is that they're prepared to pay for, say basic skills, and then they should publish their contributions towards it," Mr Hoyle said.

"So what does that leave you with? It leaves you the rest to be paid for by the employer and or individual."

Mr Hoyle later added that the industry had got it wrong for "the last decade or more."

"It's always been employer designed, employer funded, and maybe with a contribution from the individual. That's the way it's always been until the mid-1990s," Mr Hoyle said.

"We should never have lost that picture, and we should be promoting apprenticeships to employers as an investment which they cannot afford not to make.

"We ought to be going straight to employers, and saying this is an investment in your bottom line productivity, profitability, and here are the predicted returns from the database.

"Oh and by the way, the government will actually contribute towards it!"

Mick Fletcher, Policy Advisor for the 157 Group, said that "in broad terms" Mr Hoyle's comments are correct.

"It's entirely due to providers responding to the financial incentives and the targets that government agencies have set. I don't blame providers and I don't blame firms," Mr Fletcher said.

"It's starting to look too much like a government funded programme, as opposed to government encouragement of an employer funded programme."

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) disagrees with Mr Hoyle and says that employers are already paying enough towards the cost of apprenticeships.

"Employers already invest heavily in apprenticeships and bear a lot of the costs which include on-the-job

training, allocated staff time to supervise apprentices and wage costs", a spokesperson from CBI said.

"The extra funding Government has made available for apprenticeships is welcome, and has supported firms to take on and train more people."

The 'Independent Review of Fees and Co-Funding in Further Education in England', written by Christopher Banks in July 2010 argued that changes to the current funding system were needed.

The review states: "The current system has failed to prioritise, explain and secure the co-investment contributions from those adults and employers who can and should contribute to the costs of learning."

"A culture has been generated in which colleges and training providers, individual learners and employers have all come to expect that training will be "free" to them, and fully funded by the Government."

Teresa Frith, Senior Skills Policy Manager at the Association of Colleges (AoC), said there was no simple fix for apprenticeship funding.

"Employers could argue that they shouldn't be paying for literacy and

numeracy skills or knowledge and skills that the apprentice will rarely use in their current role. With the current economic situation, it is unrealistic to expect a significant increase in employer contributions to training."

"There are no simple solutions to the question of how to pay for their training."

Apprentices could be forced to pay for their training under an FE loans system recently proposed by government.

"We're sceptical about the Government's plan to get apprentices themselves to pay with the help of loans and we're concerned that the new large employer pilot schemes could result in corners being cut," Frith said.

Mr Fletcher added that he didn't think apprentices should be required to pay for their training.

"Young people contribute to the programme through taking lower wages. As apprentices that's been the traditional balance of responsibility and I'm not inclined to at this stage to say that young people should be paying employers for the privilege of being trained," Mr Fletcher said.

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### Harlow MP profile



Robert Halfon talks to *FE Week* about support for apprenticeships  
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### Campus round-up



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### Sudoku fun!



Bored at a conference? Play our competition with a twist

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Careers guidance set to face challenging future

**Free vocational training for adults criticised**  
*Nick Summers @SummersNicholas*

Association of Employment and Learning Providers calls on employers to contribute

The event, 'New Beginnings - Sustaining the Future', was a chance for the further education (FE) sector to discuss how they could cope with new legislation and a shrinking workforce.

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# Train to Gain volumes prove ‘lesson in government-speak’

**Nick Summers**  
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The number of learners starting workplace learning continues to thrive despite the government's focus on increasing apprenticeships.

The number of new starts in Train to Gain/Workplace learning fell to 444,700 in 2010/11, a figure still higher than the record number of new apprentices, a total of 442,700, praised by the government last week (see page 8).

The figures, found in the latest Statistical First Release (SFR), also mean that there has been little growth in the overall number of people starting work-based training.

Professor Alison Wolf, an advisor to Government on 14-19 vocational learning, said: "If you search for 'Train to Gain' on line, you'll be told that the government abolished it last year in order to free resources for more valuable activities.

"So these figures are an interesting lesson in government-speak. Given what is also happening with apprenticeships, you have to wonder whether ministers are taking rising youth unemployment an iota as seriously as they should be."

Overall numbers of Train to Gain/Workplace learning starts did fall, but some areas saw increases. Qualifications in the Leisure, Travel and Tourism Sector Subject Area rose dramatically by 34 per cent in 2010/11.

The SFR supplementary tables also showed an increase of eight per cent in Train to Gain/Workplace learning starts in Tottenham and Slough, and there was a similar increase of seven per cent in Hastings and Rye during 2010/11.

The findings add to fears that some of the new apprentices being praised by government could in fact be existing employees which would have previously been funded under Train to Gain.

New apprentices aged 25 and above increased by 126,500 in 2010/11, while new learners starting a Train to Gain/Workplace Learning qualification went down by 130,200.

John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, told *FE Week* that he was not concerned with the rise in apprentices aged 25 and above.

Mr Hayes said: "You're right. There was growth in 25+, partly of course because we've made apprenticeships our principle vehicle for reskilling and up skilling the workforce.

"It's true that we need to calibrate the system to ensure there's growth across the piste, and we are looking at that. I wouldn't want growth to be exclusively in one area, and it isn't currently, but if there were any risk of that I would take action to ensure there was consistent and sustainable growth.

"There's a misunderstanding I think on the part of people who don't quite get apprenticeships. They assume all apprenticeships are all about making the first step into training and work.

"Apprenticeships also serve a vitally important function in providing an opportunity for people to add to their skills who are already at work."

Train to Gain came under heavy criticism from Mr Hayes when he was Shadow Minister. In November 2009 he said: "The service has a massive dead weight cost. Money for Train to Gain will be transferred into a new budget. The scheme accredits existing skills that are on offer and assesses rather than trains. It doesn't focus on higher-level skills."

# Careers conference told to step up and get with the programme

**Nick Summers**  
*@SummersNicholas*

Careers guidance professionals were told to step up and get with the programme at the Institute of Careers Guidance (ICG) conference in Brighton.

Ruth Spellman, chair of the Careers Profession Alliance, said: "We need as never before to stand together. The profession is looking very beleaguered, and we need to address that."

Steve Higginbotham, ICG President, said: "The last 12 months has seen the most intense and sustained period of change ever."

The event, 'New Beginnings - Sustaining the Future', was a chance for the further education (FE) sector to discuss how they could cope with new legislation and a shrinking workforce.

John Hayes, Minister for FE, Skills and Lifelong Learning said the sector would "simply have to do more with less" as it "approached a moment of immense significance."

Mr Hayes added the sector would need "to be very creative and enterprising" to deal with the

tough economic climate. "I don't want there to be any illusion that it was better in the past. It wasn't the right model," he said.

The two day event will include keynote presentations from Peter Lauener, chief executive of the Young People's Learning Agency and Simon Hughes, deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats.

*FE Week* also asked Mr Hayes whether or not he thought large employers like Morrisons and Asda should be contributing cash towards apprenticeships.

He said: "It's right that large employers should make a contribution to the scheme, it's absolutely right. What I said in opposition is that it was time for a debate about who pays for what. This is what individuals pay, which is why we're talking about changing some of the funding assumptions around provisionals, and what the government should pay, and that's where it can put it's money to maximum effect, as well as what employers pay. It's perfectly appropriate to have that debate."

A full report from the ICG Conference will be available in the next edition of *FE Week*.

# Colleges to keep left-over funding

Clawback will be waived for providers who have delivered 97 per cent or more of their targets, the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has revealed.

The SFA, in Issue 81 of their updates weekly bulletin, say they have agreed principles for managing 2010/11 funding outturn for all grant-funded providers.

This is subject to the final data return for 2010/11, which is due this month.

The proposed approach, the Agency say, is intended to ensure that past and current performance is reflected in future funding allocations.

It reads: "A tolerance of three per cent will be applied to the final outturn for 2010/11, so clawback will be waived for providers who have delivered 97 per cent or more.

"Therefore, most providers will not be subject to clawback for 2010/11."

A number of factors will be taken into account for those below the tolerance, states the SFA, such as performance in previous years and accuracy of mid-year estimates for 2010/11 in deciding whether clawback will be applied.

SFA adds: "Where a provider has delivered more than 100 per cent of the allocation for 2010/11, the assumption will be this year that the Agency will fund over-performance, subject to a normal maximum of 10 per cent of the total allocation or £1m, whichever is lower."

The update also states "In cases where there has been significant under-performance and where this was not declared in mid-year estimates, the Agency may rebase a provider's allocation for 2011/12. This may be in addition to, or instead of, clawback."

This month, the SFA's relationship teams will speak to providers who may be subject to clawback or rebasing to "understand the circumstances" behind it.

Decisions will be communicated to providers next month.

The SFA also revealed it is in a position to allocate additional funding in 2011/12.

The update adds: "This will be used to increase training opportunities targeted at low skilled young people aged 19-24 who are NEET.

"Providers who have delivered on target or above in 2010/11 and/or believe they could deliver more provision for this group in 2011/12 are invited to speak to their Agency Relationship Team before November 18."

Funding Allocations for the next academic year, due to be released next month, will be calculated on the actual performance in 2010/11.

The final funding allocation for 2012/13 is due to be issued in March 2012 and it will be updated to reflect mid-year estimates for 2011/12.

The update adds: "This means that it may be higher or lower than the initial allocation. "The Agency will review mid-year estimates to ensure they are reasonable and realistic, including looking at the accuracy of estimates for previous years.

"This will ensure that allocations for 2012/13 reflect current performance in 2011/12, as well as past performance in 2010/11."



# Apprenticeship marketers doing more for less

Nick Reinis

@fenickr

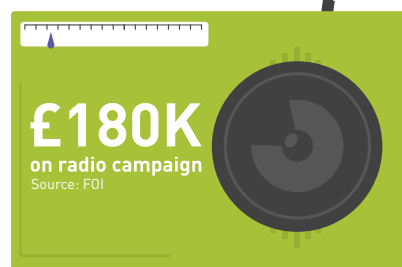
Those with a good ear for sound bites would have found it hard to miss the latest campaign to push apprenticeships on their radios.

But what most people may not know is the budget for the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to produce those catchy ads, which highlight the importance and success of apprenticeships, has been significantly depleted.

Figures obtained by FE Week under a Freedom of Information (FOI) request with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) show the marketing pot for the NAS has reduced from £8.7

**“Apprenticeships keep us ahead of the game so that we remain competitive”**

-Radio Campaign



million in 2008/09, to £1.5 million this year.

It is a quite dramatic fall; particularly when apprenticeships and targets are at the forefront of the coalition government's agenda.

Just last week, the statistical first release (SFR) figures showed a record rise in apprenticeship starts across all age ranges.

However, while the reduction appears to be drastic, the NAS were one of only “a small number” of government departments, insist the SFA, to dodge the swinging axe of reform and the cruel bite of budget cuts.

Over the last year, the Cabinet Office has put a stop to departmental marketing spend unless it is deemed essential - a category the NAS appears to fall into.

The FOI read: “Along with a small number of other government departments, the NAS has received an exemption to invest in marketing and communications activity to support the achievement of the Apprenticeship targets and objectives.”

“The marketing budget for the financial year 2011-12 is approximately £1.548 million and equates to 0.11 per cent of the overall Apprenticeship budget.

“This is supplemented by our in-house PR and communications activities. In conjunction with this, NAS works closely with partners, employers and training providers on co-produced events and activities.”

But what is the money being spent on? The main part of the marketing campaign, according to the NAS, consists of radio advertising.

Bursts of adverts have been played during

October and will continue throughout this month and in January on stations from Talk Sport, to Jazz Fm.

Newspaper adverts are also running in the national and local press, as well as a telemarketing and direct mail link up.

The FOI added: “The campaign will highlight the business benefits of apprenticeships to employers facing the realities of the current economic climate and describe how apprenticeships can supply a skilled, talented workforce.

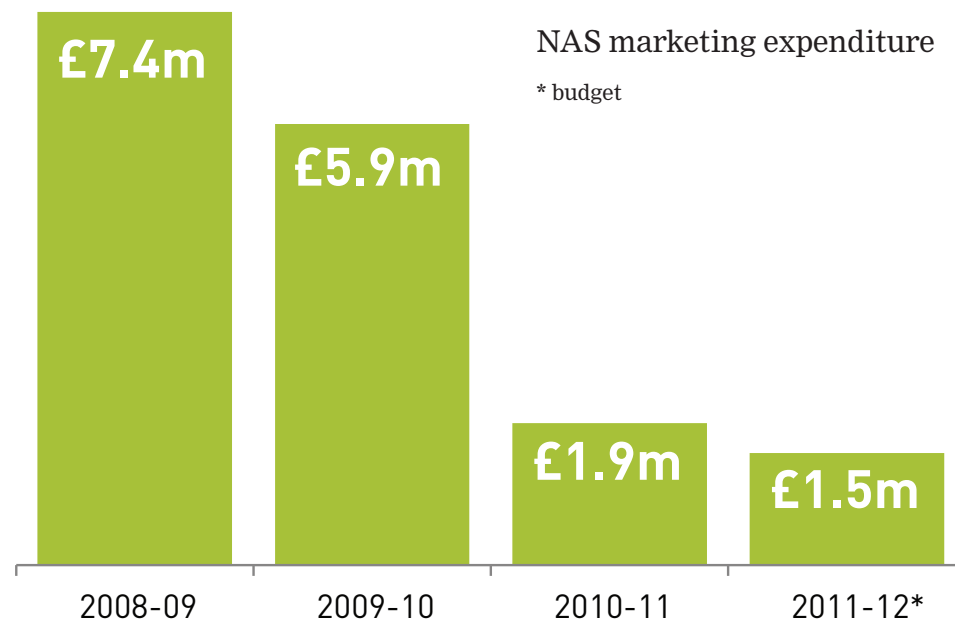
“The campaign will focus on smaller employers, those who haven't participated

in apprenticeship programmes, and those employers who are recruiting.”

The budget will also help fund next year's National Apprenticeship Week, as well as a “specific focus” on new opportunities in London.

Last week, a new marketing campaign led by both the NAS and City Hall highlighting the value of apprenticeships was launched to target businesses across the capital, with Mayor of London Boris Johnson aiming for 100,000 apprentices by 2012.

Will the trend of marketing decline continue? The budget for 2012/13 is yet to be decided.



## BIS to review SFA and role of their Chief Executive

Nick Reinis

@fenickr

Transparency and accountability will be the joint focus of a review launched this week into the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

But while its aim is defined, the mechanisms of the review are unclear, with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), and the SFA both tight-lipped when questioned by *FE Week*.

Also unknown is how long it will take, with its outcome due to be revealed “in due course”.

However, what is known is its reasoning, as it comes in line with the Cabinet Office Public Bodies Review Programme - a commitment to undertake a regular evaluation of key delivery bodies, explained a BIS spokesperson.

“It is a largely technical exercise, aimed at ensuring we have arrangements in place which will work effectively for all concerned and maximise delivery of the further education and skills agenda,” the spokesperson added.

Initial announcement of the review was made by John Hayes MP, minister of state for further education, skills and lifelong learning.

He said: “I would like to inform parliament the government is announcing a review of the status of the chief executive of Skills Funding

and the SFA - the body which supports him in carrying out his statutory duties.

“The review is consistent with the Cabinet Office Public Bodies Review Programme, and reflects the requirement...to undertake a regular review of key delivery bodies, and the Government's ongoing commitment to radically increase the transparency and accountability of all public services.”

The minister also told MPs that he would be seeking consultation from sector as a whole as part of the review.

He added: “I will be writing today to the further education and skills sector and to key stakeholders more widely about the review; and can confirm both the Skills Funding Agency and wider stakeholders will be fully engaged in the review process, whilst meeting the core principles set by Cabinet Office of ensuring that any wider consultation is proportionate and provides clear value for money.”

He concluded by saying that the review would build on the strength of the further education system.

“It is vital that we have the right structures in place to tackle the very real challenges that lie ahead; and this review reflects the Government's ongoing commitment to building on the strength of the further education system, whilst ensuring rigorous accountability structures are in place.

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*FE Week investigates...*

# Non-traditional delivery models

In recent weeks the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) revealed to *FE Week* that a review was underway into the appropriateness of short apprenticeships. Delivery models, the NAS said, which do not come up to scratch with specific guidance in the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) may need to change or face the loss of funding. However, the body also said the review will judge some cases as “appropriate”, despite not meeting the SASE. *FE Week* takes a closer look at two different delivery apprenticeship models being advertised at present.

## SQi training provider pays the wage for 15 week apprenticeship

A training provider is offering free work placements to businesses including the cost of the wage for an apprentice.

SQi Watford Ltd (SQi) has revealed to *FE Week* it advertises free placements and pays the wage as an incentive to businesses to take on apprentices.

But West Herts College and its subcontractor Best Practice Training and Development (BPT) say the arrangement is “compliant” with Skills Funding Agency (SFA) guidelines.

BPT is subcontracted by West Herts College to provide training to apprentices. They then pay SQi but insist it is not from their SFA pot.

In August, the NAS, reiterating a document

from the SFA, said providers should not use money from the SFA to pay apprentices.

In Paragraph 66 of the SFA's Apprenticeship Funding Requirements 2011/12 document, it reads: “Apprenticeship funding cannot be used to pay Apprenticeship wages, as its primary function is to fund learning. Therefore, where the Provider is the employer, or an associate organisation is the employer, the Provider must be able to positively demonstrate that Agency funds are not being used in this way.”

SQi offers Level 2 Business and Administration apprenticeships over a 15-week course for 16 to 18-year-olds. It includes a 10-week work placement, with apprentices

placed into local businesses “free-of charge” by SQi, who pay £2.60 per hour apprenticeship minimum wage for a 30-hour week.

Mikki Davis, apprenticeship manager at SQi, said: “SQi pay the wages. People find it very difficult to get work placements.

“It's tight and businesses don't have money to pay apprentices. We couldn't find placements when they (businesses) had to pay.

“We are trying to bring that (businesses paying the wage) into effect.”

Duncan Murray, the director of skills and enterprise at the college, said BPT is “registered separately at Company House” to SQi. A check by *FE Week* found they share the same two directors and registered address.

Mr Murraray added: “West Herts College is aware SQi pay the wages of apprentices registered with us, and this is completely compliant with SFA guidelines.

“Our compliance team is perfectly happy with the arrangement as is the NAS and their Best Practice team.”

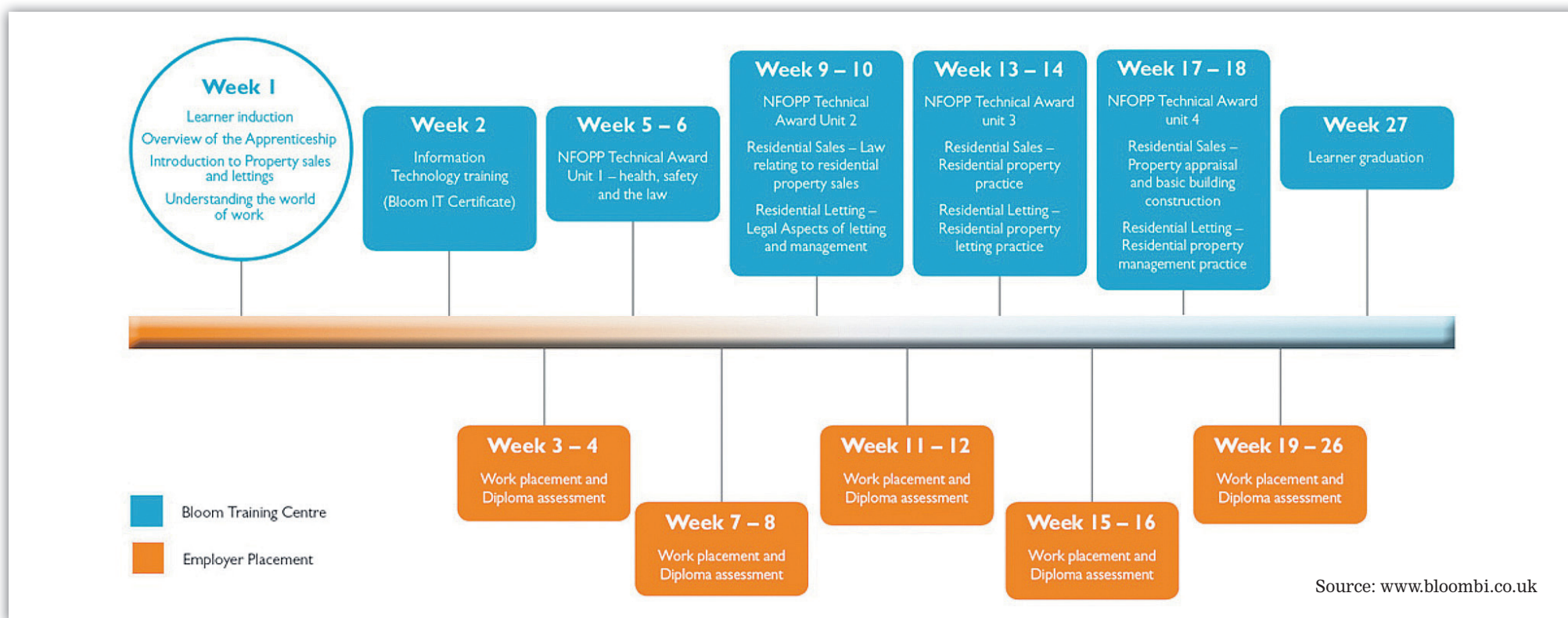
David Allenstein, director at BPT, said SQi are funded by a different arm of BPT, which does not involve SFA funding.

He said: “SQi does not draw funding from the Skills Funding Agency for the payment of apprenticeship wages.

“This area is funded by the commercial training arm of Best Practice Training.”

The NAS are investigating the case.

## Bloom offer Estate Agents 26 week Level 3 apprenticeships



Changes will be made to a delivery model to ensure it is an “accurate reflection” of its outcome.

Training provider Bloom offers Level 3 apprenticeships in Sale of Residential Property and Letting and Property Management, which appear to take place in half of the time of the suggested framework.

As set out by Asset Skills, the Sector Skills Council, in their Property Services apprenticeship framework document, it is “envisaged that the apprenticeship will take 12 months” to complete.

However, the courses delivered by Bloom

are said to take place over “26 weeks” which includes “a mixture of classroom based activity and work placements” with two sales and two lettings models run each year.

A schedule on the firm's website shows a typical plan, which details the mix of work at the Bloom Training Centre and on work placements.

Following an induction week and week two on IT training, the apprentice is put on the placement for week three and four.

The programme continues in the centre completing three NFOPP units, interspersed with time on placements.

In total, the apprentice will spend 16 weeks on placement and the remaining 10 weeks working to qualifications. A final 27th week is for graduation.

However, Steven Proudfoot, Chief Operating Officer at Asset Skills, said: “It's an ambitious timeframe. Our concern is to ensure everything is done correctly and the right learning hours are allowed and it's being delivered effectively.

“We have been working with Bloom and delivered 10 to 12 certificates for Bloom, which have taken nine months to complete.

“We are working with them to make sure their website is updated to show it is a more

accurate reflection to the actual model.”

He added: “We always want to work with the providers and the sector to make sure the model is the best for the candidate.”

Di McEvoy-Robinson, director at Bloom, said they set the 26 week model after talks with the employers in the sector.

However, they are now working to rework the model.

She said: “However, the reality for the first 14 to 15 candidates is that it's taken nine to 10 months. If some take 15 months, then that's fine too. It's about meeting the candidates individual needs.”



## FE Week profile

## Robert Halfon ~ his story

Janet Murray

@jan\_murray

The Harlow MP and apprenticeship advocate talks to *FE Week*

“I always think the best test of a person is not when they’re winning; it’s how they recover from defeat and adversity,” says Rob Halfon. And he would know. It took him three attempts to win his seat in parliament. On his second go, he lost by just 87 votes.

But the Harlow MP, best known for pioneering apprenticeships in Westminster, has faced struggles in his own life, which may go some way to explaining his persistence and determination. Halfon was born with Spastic Diplegia, a form of Cerebral Palsy, which affects the lower extremities – usually the legs, hips and pelvis.

Halfon says he has a moderate version of the disease (he was a late walker and underwent several major operations as a child) and things were “relatively good” until his early thirties when he started to suffer with osteoarthritis, as a result of all the surgery he’d had as a child.

He jokes stoically that his worsening health problems were the “curse” of becoming a Tory candidate.

But he refuses to feel sorry for himself and is keen to point out that he has “no hang ups”. In fact, he says, he has been very lucky in life. By his own admission, he had a privileged upbringing in a Jewish family with traditional values and went to Highgate, an independent school in north London. His father had a fruit and vegetable wholesalers in East London. “It was work hard, save hard and do the right thing...that kind of mentality,” he recalls.

His father, and his grandfather before him also knew about struggle, he says. They fled Libya in the early days of the Gadaffi regime, after the family house and business were seized by the dictatorship. His father came to the UK with nothing, made money, and lost it all again in the recession of the 1990s.

Halfon says he was “terrible” at school, always wanting to do his own thing, (lying on his bed reading and listening to the radio, mainly). Academically, he didn’t start to shine until sixth form when he only had to study things that interested him, he says.

By that point, he was already active in the Conservative party, “canvassing...knocking on doors and stuffing envelopes – the whole thing.” He also had his heart set on becoming a Tory MP and his inspiration was Margaret Thatcher.

“I loved Mrs Thatcher from the beginning,” he says, practically drooling. “I remember seeing a cartoon about her in the Express and think ‘God she was strong.’ I love strong

women, always have done. Queen Elizabeth was always my favourite queen, my favourite monarch in history.”

So while other teenage boys’ bedroom walls were plastered with Blondie, Linda Lusardi and Sam Fox, Halfon had the Iron Lady’s signature on his. “My dad took me to a St. John’s Ambulance event when I was about 16 and I shook her hand and she signed the invitation which I framed,” he explains, still clearly chuffed about it. “In fact, I have it framed in my loo.”

Halfon went on to Exeter University to study politics, where he became chairman of Exeter University conservatives and the Western Area Conservative Students. He also famously took the National Union of Students (NUS) to the European Court of Human Rights - and won - on the issue of compulsory membership.

After a stint selling hotel memberships at a posh London hotel, he got a job as a part-time researcher with Harold Elletson (who subsequently defected to the Liberal party) and over the following decade worked for various Tory MPs including Michael Fabricant, MP for Lichfield. But after losing the Harlow seat a second time in 2005, he decided it was all or nothing.

“It’s not like any job when you’ve got another interview next week,” he says. “You’ve got to wait another four years and campaign more. The count went on for three days, and when you have wanted something from the age of 10 and you’re that close... it was terrible but you can either make a decision of crying and sitting in a darkened room and thinking ‘I’m never going to fight again’ or dust yourself down and try again.”

“I think it’s criminal when people leave school unable to read. Whoever’s responsible for that should be shot really”

And that is exactly what he did. He quit his job (by then he was Oliver Letwin’s chief of staff) to work as a freelance consultant, so he could devote more time to his campaign.

Halfon says he chose Harlow, where he now lives with his girlfriend (unlike many MPs, he doesn’t have a second home, he is keen to point out) because of its “incredible community spirit.” He also wanted to work in a place where there were social issues, because despite all the “nasty party stuff” the Conservatives are interested in helping the vulnerable or disadvantaged in society, he says.

In fact, it was this kind of work that first got him interested in apprenticeships. “I was visiting a charity called Catch 22 and I met these kids who’d had various problems with the law...and they all started talking about



Picture by Nick Linford

apprenticeships. They started saying that there were no opportunities for them and if they looked at the National Apprenticeship Service website they might be lucky if there was one apprenticeship advertised in Leeds or something. The God’s honest truth is that I was moved.”

And he wasn’t alone, he says. At a hustings debate at Harlow College, in the run up for his third attempt to win the Harlow seat, he recalls seeing “everyone just wake up” when he started to talk about apprenticeships. “It was incredible, the feeling from the room.

And when I talked to parents that was what they wanted...I decided to make it a central plank of my manifesto.”

Since then he has gone on to recruit the first apprentice in parliament, help launch a National Apprentice Card (in conjunction with his old nemesis, the NUS) and a professional society for apprentices is in the early stages of development.

Halfon has also been instrumental in setting up a new parliamentary apprentice programme with the charity New Deal of The Mind Known as the “school of apprentices”, it will offer 16- to 19-year-olds the chance to spend up to three days a week working in Westminster, along with two days working towards a level 3 apprenticeship (equivalent to A-level) in business administration.

It’s early days for the cross-party scheme, but around 12 of the 650 MPs have signed up so far and more are thought to follow. His second apprentice, Louis Luck, has just been appointed

But in an age of Blackberries (Halfon is certainly addicted to his) and Twitter, being an MP is more 24/7 than it ever was and he admits it can be hard to find time to relax. He still reads a lot, mostly news, but also gadget and techie magazines. He also collects watches and has almost 200 displayed all over his house.

Watching “rubbish” on the telly (he is a fan of soaps and of course Essex-based reality TV show The Only Way is Essex) is another popular pastime, which acts “like a vacuum cleaner of the mind” for him.

But, he admits, it can be tough to switch off and he is often up at ridiculous hours of the night, tweeting or writing his blog. While he finds it easy enough to drop off, he is often awake, a few hours later, his mind racing. Like many Westminster folk, caffeine and adrenaline gets him through the long days in parliament.

As well as his apprenticeships work, Halfon is also an active campaigner on tax cuts (particularly on petrol) and says he believes in “tax cuts for the many, not for the few.” But education and training is what really seems to drive him; he is a big fan of university technical college and would like his next campaign to focus on basic literacy.

He explains with his typical candour. “If you look at the statistics of young delinquents and criminals and so on...most of them have dyslexia or reading problems. I think it’s criminal when people leave school unable to read. Whoever’s responsible for that should be shot really.”



## FE Week out and about

### The 157 Group annual reception

The 157 Group published its impact review for 2010-11 alongside a collection of “eight learner voices” at its Annual Reception at Microsoft’s London offices on Tuesday (1st November).

Adult literacy: the voice of learners in FE comprises of a collection of stories about eight adult learners’ literacy journeys with a foreword by NIACE’s Chief Executive David Hughes and introduction by new chair and principal of Barnet College, Marilyn Hawkins. The publication highlights the importance of embracing and acting upon the learner voice, particularly those with poor literacy skills.

The reception which was hosted by Microsoft and also attended by the Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, John Hayes MP. Hayes who later spoke at the reception said “We are entering a new dawn for FE and its learners...we are pro student voice and I am committed to not having a Vanilla flavoured FE system.”



## FE Week expert

### How would you survive without ‘Mickey Mouse’?



What harm has Mickey Mouse ever done to anyone? No, I can’t think of anything either ... so how has poor Mickey’s name become associated with the worthless and the risible? Back in the summer the Sunday Express gave us this:

“...a stark warning from the British Chamber of Commerce: do not go to university unless you plan to study something useful. Policy director Dr Adam Marshall said: “There may be a course in underwater basket weaving but that does not mean anybody will actually want to employ you at the end of it.’ Universities should be banned from running Mickey

Mouse courses that are best left to further education colleges.”

Poor Dr Marshall was on the receiving end of quite a lot of stick for this, but he was set up. It was that last sentence that seemed so gratuitous.

Of course, poor Mickey’s crumbling reputation is all the fault of Margaret Hodge (BSc Third Class). In 2003 she opined that a Mickey Mouse course: ‘is one where the content is perhaps not as rigorous as one would expect and where the degree itself may not have huge relevance in the labour market’.

Here comes Alan Johnson (11+) in the Guardian:

“We must rebalance taxpayers’ money towards the subjects where there is greatest need – so more plumbing, less Pilates; subsidised precision engineering, not over-subsidised flower arranging...”

Johnson went on to suggest that ...

“Teachers and politicians should stop talking about ‘vocational’ courses and use the word ‘professional’ instead, as part of a drive to recruit young people with skills needed by industry and ‘end our endemic prejudice against vocational qualifications as inferior to academic achievement’.”

“The former postman said: ‘I would be quite happy to lose the word ‘vocational’ com-

pletely from our school dictionaries if it was proved to deter people from taking these vital courses.”

He has a point, though the Guardian reporter (now Head of Communications for the Russell Group) just had to use that ‘former postman’ prefix.

Indeed, scratch the surface and the class-based sneering is almost always there, even among Mickey’s friends. Here is Boris Johnson (BA Literae Humaniores) coming out in defence of poor Mickey:

“Kids these days! says our man with the pint of Stella, slapping the Daily Telegraph on the bar. Look at the rubbish they study!

... Why, he asks rhetorically, are we paying for students to waste their time on these Mickey Mouse courses, when it is perfectly obvious what they should be doing. Trades! Skills! Craft! ... they would have been far better off getting stuck into a job after leaving school and engaging in an old-fashioned apprenticeship.”

Yet we all interact daily with people who are the products of FE – the hairdressers, car mechanics, restaurant staff, receptionists ... so how does FE achieve such apparent invisibility?

It’s partly that their achievements are badged by the exam boards. That framed certificate is branded by Edexcel, not by FE. But ask any

cabby for the local college and they will say, ‘You mean the Tech?’ and take you there while telling you all about the courses they and their kids have attended.

Strip the tech out of a town and how would you ever get anything fixed, cut or cooked? We’d all go shaggy and starve and have to walk everywhere. Next time you get your hair cut or your car repaired, ask them where they trained. I guarantee the ‘tech word will crop up.

Wasn’t it Kenneth Baker who invited the ‘Cinderella sector’ to come onto the dance floor? He is now busy with his university technical colleges, which have the revolutionary idea of training 14–19 year olds in practical vocational skills. My old dad knew about those in the 1930s – I still have the agreement signed by him, his employer and Leicester Tech in 1933 for his apprenticeship, recently rediscovered with delight by Asda

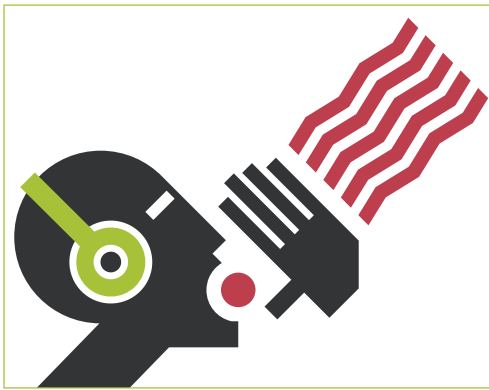
Let’s allow Boris the last word:

“It is ridiculous for these saloon-bar critics to denounce ‘Mickey Mouse’ degrees, and say that the students would be better off doing vocational courses – when the whole point is that these degrees are very largely vocational. It’s just a pity that he didn’t pause to consider who is fixing his bike or styling his hair.”

*Nick Warren is an FE marketing consultant for Policy Consortium*



## FE Week Agitator



Time is running out to respond to Ofsted's consultation on its new Common Inspection Framework proposals.

The deadline is November 24 so if you're thinking about adding your two-penneth, you need to get your skates on.

This is a rare opportunity to pass judgment on Ofsted (doesn't normally happen that way around).

After reading the document, Agitator felt the need to share one of the more 'radical' proposals.

The consultation proposes that 'Ofsted will welcome requests for inspection and it will be for HMCI to decide whether and when to inspect the provider.

The Education Bill provides Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) with additional

## Inspections for sale. Whose bright idea was that!?

powers to agree to requests for schools and providers to be inspected and to charge a fee for such an inspection.'

So, it's Ofsted's idea that colleges should have the ability to buy a quickie re inspection.

**“How will Ofsted be able to maintain its independence if its for hire?”**

Now, call me a bluff old traditionalist but doesn't this have the words 'unintended consequences' written all over it? I mean, Ofsted is not X Factor... should you really be able to 'come back' the following year, if you don't quite live up to expectations, and pay to have another go?

Clearly the price tag once decided would be of considerable interest, and discussions I've heard in the sector have mooted figures of between £35K and £50K for a re inspection.

You might wonder why college's would spend their increasingly squeezed budgets on more Ofsted inspections.

Here's a few reasons why:

College A is less than happy with its new Ofsted grade. It may have been an outstanding college that has narrowly missed its previously earned 'beacon' status.

College A is going to be under tremendous pressure to part with £50K of its learners' dosh to buy back its reputation.

College B is a good provider that has improved significantly since its previous inspection, it may feel that there is compelling evidence (£50K's worth) that it might be judged outstanding were it to be re inspected.

College C was previously judged outstanding and is exempted from routine inspection it's feeling pretty confident and would like to renew its 'outstanding' badge and is happy to pay tens of thousands of pounds to do so.

College D is a really failing college, and is asking if there's a 'buy two get one free' offer!

Joking aside, this new departure doesn't sit right. College relationships with Ofsted are bound to change as they become a source of income.

Will colleges be demanding a different service if they are paying for it? Will Ofsted get any

future business if re-inspections do not result in higher grades?

**“Ofsted is not X Factor... should you really be able to 'come back' if you don't quite live up to expectations, and pay to have another go”**

As Ofsted becomes commercialised there may even be competition, like the train and utility companies.

I guess the big and concise question that I'm actually asking is, How will Ofsted be able to maintain its independence if its for hire? Will Ofsted be tempted to downgrade colleges to upsell a re inspection? How would we know?

And... will Ofsted have institution or monetary targets to meet, to measure the effectiveness of this new...venture?

Agitator lays the unanswered questions bare, inspect them carefully and let me know what you think....at no charge.

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# *FE Week gets technical*

In advance of our House of Commons apprenticeship debate (real or rebrand?) on 9 November *FE Week* summarises the stats on one handy **pull-out**. Source: [http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr\\_current/](http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr_current/) \*Provisional

## Train to Gain / Workplace Learning starts by age and year

Age	2009/10		2010/11*		Shift	Shift %
19-24	84,940	14.8%	68,930	15.5%	-16,010	-19%
25-34	153,220	26.7%	120,360	27.1%	-32,860	-21%
35-44	161,700	28.1%	120,550	27.1%	-41,150	-25%
45-59	157,490	27.4%	121,190	27.2%	-36,300	-23%
60+	17,590	3.1%	13,720	3.1%	-3,870	-22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>574,940</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>444,750</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>-130,190</b>	<b>-23%</b>

## Other interesting statistics picked out by *FE Week*

Only 8% fewer starts in London, whilst 35% fewer in the South West  
 Leisure, Travel and Toursim starts actually up 35% to 12,130  
 Percentage of BME starts has increased from 14% to 16%

## Apprenticeship starts by age, year and level

Level 2	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11*	Increase on 2009/10	
Under 19	77,100	80,800	82,000	74,200	89,400	95,100	5,700	6%
19-24	45,600	46,500	55,200	52,600	72,800	87,700	14,900	20%
25+	100	100	14,600	31,700	28,400	109,900	81,500	287%
<b>Total</b>	<b>122,800</b>	<b>127,400</b>	<b>151,800</b>	<b>158,500</b>	<b>190,500</b>	<b>292,700</b>	<b>102,200</b>	<b>54%</b>

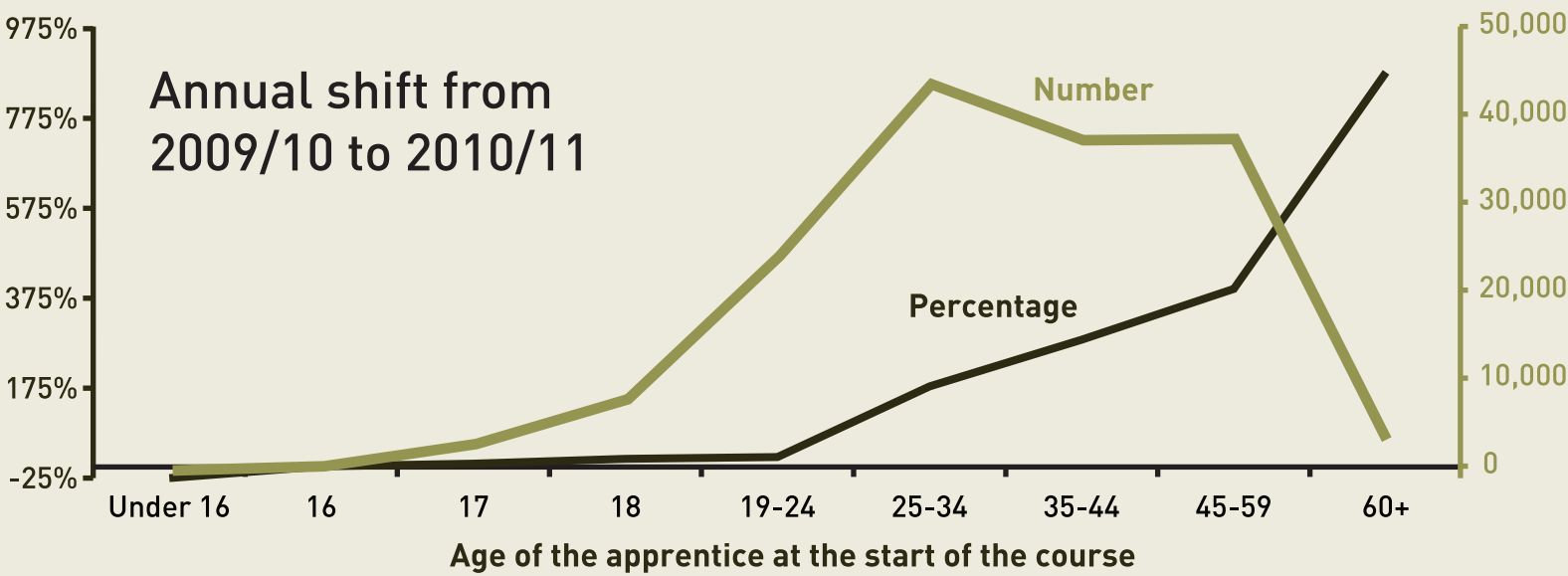
Level 3	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11*	Increase on 2009/10	
Under 19	22,400	24,800	25,500	25,100	27,200	33,000	5,800	21%
19-24	29,500	32,000	34,800	32,000	39,800	49,900	10,100	25%
25+	200	100	12,600	24,200	20,600	65,000	44,400	216%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52,100</b>	<b>56,900</b>	<b>72,900</b>	<b>81,300</b>	<b>87,700</b>	<b>147,900</b>	<b>60,200</b>	<b>69%</b>

All Level 2 and 3	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11*	Increase on 2009/10	
Under 19	99,500	105,600	107,500	99,300	116,600	128,100	11,500	10%
19-24	75,100	78,500	90,000	84,600	112,600	137,600	25,000	22%
25+	300	200	27,200	55,900	49,000	174,900	125,900	257%
<b>Total</b>	<b>174,900</b>	<b>184,300</b>	<b>224,700</b>	<b>239,800</b>	<b>278,200</b>	<b>440,600</b>	<b>162,400</b>	<b>58%</b>

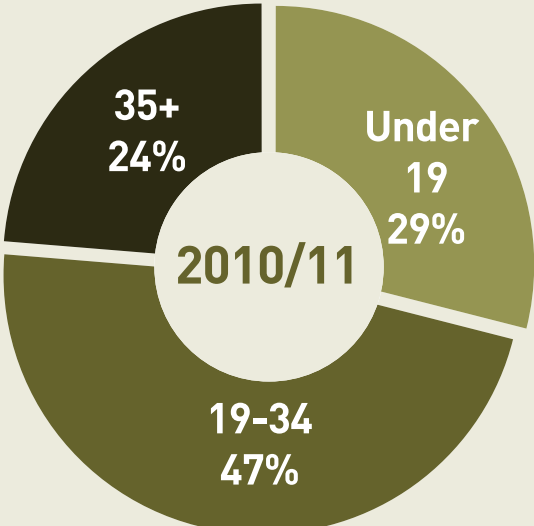
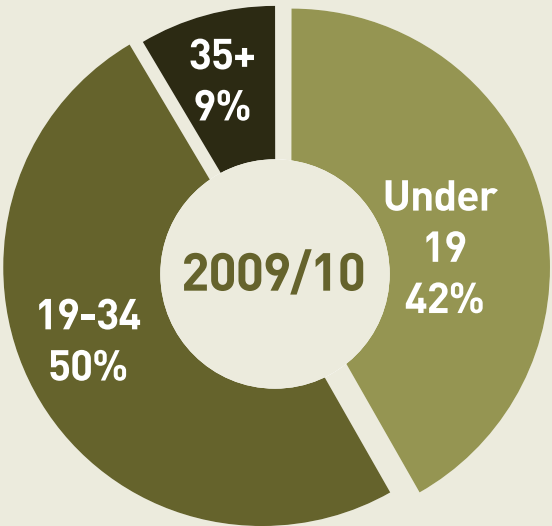


# Apprenticeship starts by age and year

Age	2009/10		2010/11*		Shift	Shift %
Under 16	400	-	300	-	-100	-25%
16	29,380	11%	29,750	7%	370	1%
17	40,780	15%	43,780	10%	3,000	7%
18	46,220	17%	54,480	12%	8,260	18%
19-24	113,770	41%	138,870	31%	25,100	22%
25-34	25,250	9%	70,540	16%	45,290	179%
35-44	13,680	5%	52,400	12%	38,720	283%
45-59	9,810	4%	48,650	11%	38,840	396%
60+	400	-	3,910	1%	3,510	878%
Total	279,700	100%	442,700	100%	163,000	58%



Age	2009/10		2010/11*		Shift	Shift %
Under 19	116,780	42%	128,310	29%	11,530	10%
19-34	139,020	50%	209,410	47%	70,390	51%
35+	23,890	9%	104,960	24%	81,070	339%
Total	279,690	100%	442,680	100%	162,990	58%





# FE Week campus round-up



## Burton and South Derbyshire college opens stylish new facilities in refurbishment plans

A multi-million pound college refurbishment programme has continued with the opening of a brand £500,000 new facility.

Works at Burton and South Derbyshire College include a new hairdressing salon, the installation of electronic white boards in classrooms, new IT equipment and a refurbished study centre, with new flooring, upgraded décor and furniture.

The new hair and beauty salon, Innovations, has now opened to the public and offers a range of treatments, which are carried out by students who are being assessed for the practical elements of their courses.

More than £14m has been invested in facilities at the college in the last six years including a Design and Creative Industries Centre

(£3.6m), Sports Centre (£1.5m), Automotive and Engineering Skills Academy (£2m) and a University Centre (£5.2m).

The most recent refurbishments also included the development of a new Microsoft IT Academy, hailed as “the future of education” by Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Iain Duncan-Smith MP, during a visit to the college last month.

Dawn Ward OBE, chief executive and principal, said: “We pride ourselves on providing a professional, comfortable and supportive environment for our students to study in, together with investing in the very best technical facilities to ensure students are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge that employers need, in any given sector.”



## TyneMet College help Proctor and Gamble cook up a storm at Corporate Athlete day

TyneMet College hosted a two-day training event for a group of employees from Procter & Gamble (P&G) last month.

Delegates were taught how to make a slap up dinner as part of a corporate day.

Over the two days, the group utilised the training facilities at the college, including cookery sessions led by the catering staff to cook a healthy three-course meal and exercise and fitness sessions led by North East Sports Academy (NESA) and Flex Fitness Gym’s specialist coaches in TyneMet’s purpose-built gym and sports hall.

It was arranged by TyneMet Governor, Dr Graeme Cruickshank, who is an Associate Director of Research and Development at P&G. He said: “This event has been a fantastic success.

“Our people are our greatest strength at P&G and we reflect this in commitment to and

investment in learning and development.

“There is nothing more important than helping your employees to grow and develop and Corporate Athlete is a key part of this.”

He added: “The facilities at TyneMet College are modern, of a very high standard and they easily accommodated our group.

“We were well supported by the different college departments and having access to their expertise really helped to bring the course to life for our team.”

Victor Reid, director of business development at TyneMet College, said: “We were delighted to be able to facilitate the P&G Corporate Athlete event.

“Delivering the course at TyneMet gave us the opportunity to showcase the excellent teaching and learning resources we have.

“We look forward to working with P&G again and hosting future events for them.”

## Brian Ashton opens new sport and fitness centre Lancaster and Morcambe college



There was a scrum of activity when a former England Rugby coach opened a college’s new sports centre.

LMC Sport and Fitness, the new centre at Lancaster and Morecambe College, was launched in style by Brian Ashton last month.

The glitzy event was also attended by The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Lancaster, councillor Paul Woodruff, Ann Morris the chief executive of the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, representatives from sports clubs and other personalities.

The state of the art facilities were shown off by local teams and college sports tutors with the Vale of Lune RUFC training on the artificial 3G pitch and the local netball league taking part in a tournament on the Multi Use Games Area. David Wood, chief executive and principal of the college, started

proceedings for the evening with a speech on upcoming developments for the college.

Following this, the centre was officially inaugurated by Mr Ashton, who spoke about his experience of coaching experienced professional players and young people in sport, offering words of advice and encouragement to college tutors.

Nick Barrett, LMC Sport and Fitness manager, said: “The evening has been a great success and an excellent opportunity to show off our amazing facilities and what we have to offer to the local community.

“Many of the guests have commented on how impressed they are with the facilities and the great value for money.

“We are very much looking forward to welcoming them and many other new members to the centre in the coming months.”

## Success for first Suited, Booted, Recruited employment course at Filton College



Filton College are celebrating after their new Suited, Booted, Recruited course proved a roaring success.

Young people, who were not in education, employment or training, were given the opportunity to undertake the course to enhance their employability.

The two week intensive programme that commenced on 10th October 2011 was designed to enable 16-18 year olds to stand out and get noticed by potential employers. The course was a huge success and recruited more than 100 young people.

The students studied a wide range of subjects, including; manual handling, food hygiene and customer service. It incorporated softer skills which are so important in the workplace, such as timekeeping and clear communication, whilst also integrating the necessary skills

needed at interview, including; CV writing and how to sell yourself.

Former World Boxing Champion, Glenn Catley was pivotal on the programme delivering motivational and relaxation techniques, as well as great inspiration to the learners on the course.

The finale of the course was an employment event where the students were kitted out with a new suit courtesy of ASDA, ready for interviews with local employers which took place on the last day.

As a result a total of 13 students were offered jobs on the day and many more are still waiting to hear back. Sara-Jane Watkins, Vice Principal said: “I am absolutely over the moon with how the course went. It was such an emotional event seeing learners being interviewed and I am thrilled that 13 jobs have been offered today.”



## City College Brighton and Hove launch new training programme for young chefs



Student chefs hope their food will be top of the table after the launch of a new training restaurant at a football stadium.

City College Brighton and Hove has opened up City College @ East Central Brasserie inside the new American Express Community

Stadium, which is home to Championship side Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club.

It is designed to help train the next generation of chefs to achieve culinary excellence in a working environment, under the supervision of trained chefs.

Principal Phil Frier said: "It is a great coup to be involved with this wonderful new stadium and the restaurant is not just providing excellent opportunities for our Level 1 to 3 catering students, it's a great means of enhancing our reputation in the community.

"The Gallery, the training restaurant we have at the college's main campus, has gained a fantastic reputation for fine dining and we've no doubt customers at the Amex will be delighted with the quality of the food and very reasonable price."

City College @ East Central Brasserie is open Monday to Friday during term time, caters for more than 100 covers, and gives students the opportunity to train towards delivering an express lunch service.

To try for yourself, call City College @ East Central Brasserie on 01273 648095.



## Writtle College receives Royal reception

A college was given the Royal seal of approval following a visit by HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

The spotlight was on Writtle College, in Essex, as she toured the college with Lord Petre and a number of civic dignitaries.

Specialising in subjects relating to environmental design, equestrianism, agriculture and animal sciences, courses on offer are of interest to The Duchess. HRH is a keen supporter of the arts, enjoys gardening and is well known for her love of horses.

HRH's visit took her to a Higher Education Animal Science lecture where she met Dr Carlos de Luna, before moving to tour the gardens of the Writtle College estate.

Along the way, The Duchess met Beryl Wyatt MBE, an assistant gardener who has worked at the college for more than 40 years, and further education horticulture students who will be entering the 2012 Ideal Home Show Young Gardeners of the Year competition.

She was also introduced to Postgraduate

students from Postharvest, a course which looks at how fresh horticultural produce must be handled, transported and stored to maintain quality from grower to consumer.

Nicola Carroll, a professional floristry foundation degree student spoke to HRH and said: "The Duchess was really nice to talk to and she seemed genuinely interested in finding out about everyone's specialist area of study."

Finally, The Duchess visited the recently opened Titchmarsh Centre for Animal Studies, named after and officially opened by college patron, Alan Titchmarsh.

Here, The Duchess met more students and staff, talked with members of the Essex mounted police and toured the animal unit.

Professor Dave Butcher, principal at the college, said: "What a wonderful visitor to have at Writtle College.

"The Duchess was especially interested in talking to students and I took great pleasure in offering her a tour of the campus."



## City of Bath College students stand out from the crowd with t-shirt design business

Enterprising students have set up a new clothing company inspired by the skateboarding and hip hop scene.

Technology Crew clothing is the brainchild of former City of Bath College student Josh Frayling and current college student Nathaniel Osborne.

The Bath-based duo's range of t-shirts and sweatshirts aim to reflect today's street culture, with edgy, urban designs influenced by street art and graphic novels.

The eye-catching designs are the ideas of Josh (18), who studied the National Diploma in Graphic Design at City of Bath College.

He said: "The designs are meant to stand out and get people's attention. I'm a graphic designer and always trying to be different and come up with new and innovative designs and the t-shirts are an extension of that.

"At the moment we are selling online, but we're hopeful if Technology Crew clothing

really takes off we'll be able to start selling in some shops in Bath."

Nathaniel (19) is currently studying on the BTEC Diploma in Creative Media Production.

He said: "My responsibility is publicity and trying to raise the profile of the company online.

"We have our own website and are now on Facebook and Twitter, so it's just a case of getting our name out there.

"Up until recently we have been relying on word of mouth and have been selling t-shirts to friends of friends, but we want to expand now."

Both Josh and Nathaniel credited the college with having an influence on their new company.

Nathaniel, who writes for the college's online student magazine, Bladud, added: "I'm really enjoying the course.

"The teachers are great and are always there to help and inspire you."



## Carshalton College seas success with volunteer award

Michael Herneman (21), a second year student BTEC Extended Diploma in Sport & Exercise Science at Carshalton College, was awarded the London Region Aquaforce Volunteer Award in the Young Volunteer of the Year Award 2011 by ASA Swimming.

It was presented to him by former swimmer Mark Foster at a glamorous ceremony in Thomas More Square, near London Bridge.

Michael has been swimming for more than 15 years and he is also a member of the Cheam Marcuda Swimming Club.

His achievements for his club and at national level include being National Disability Champion.

For the past year, Michael has been part of a programme, mygames and has qualified as a time keeper.

This role has involved travelling to different competitions, including galas at Crystal Palace lasting more than seven hours, where Michael's commitment and attitude has been recognised along with the encouragement he gives to the competitors.

He said: "I was recommended to join the programme by my swimming coach Nick Ibrahim. I wanted to volunteer for the sport that I had grown up with.

"Being a former national winner I wanted to pay back all the support I had to young future athletes that will be excellent in the coming years."

mygames offers young people a unique opportunity to promote and celebrate the values of the 2012 Olympic Games.

Working with a mentor, Michael is developing skills and confidence to have the opportunity to volunteer at the 2012 Paralympic Trials.

Also, as a regional winner, he has been entered for a national award and could become the volunteer of the year.



## FE Week events...

# Advanced level apprenticeships key to highly skilled workforce



John Hayes, Minister FE, Skills and lifelong learning with University of Greenwich vice-chancellor, Professor David Maguire

**Nick Summers**  
@summersnicholas

Advanced Level Apprenticeships are meant to be vital for building the high-tech, high skilled workforce needed to drag Britain out of its economic slump.

The role of these vocational qualifications, and how they can help transfer learners between further education (FE) and higher education (HE), was hotly debated at the University of Greenwich last week.

Research unveiled at the event, titled 'Apprentices and Progression: Policy, Evidence and Practice', found that one in eight young people with an Advanced Level Apprenticeship now progresses onto HE.

Professor David Maguire, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Greenwich, opened the proceedings and said: "It is particularly fitting to hold today's conference here in Greenwich. The aim is to explore how best to support young people so they can move from apprenticeships into higher level skills and professional careers."

John Hayes MP, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, attended the conference to give a keynote presentation in the morning. In his speech Mr Hayes explained his vision for apprenticeships, and why he felt they were

important for improving the economy.

"Apprenticeships have a direct relationship with the current nature of the economy and the workforce needed to meet economic need," Mr Hayes said.

"So as our economy becomes increasingly high tech and high skilled, as it must if we are to prosper, it's very important that we understand the recalibration of skills in the workforce, and how they are vital for taking advantage of those new economic opportunities. By investing in the workforce through skills, in particular through apprenticeships, we can equip Britain's business with the skills they need to continue growing their productivity."

Mr Hayes also said that he was delighted

**"Investment in the future is what apprenticeships are all about"**

with the latest apprenticeship figures published in the statistical first release (SFR) last week.

The SFR found that the number of new apprentices aged below 19 has risen to 128,300, a 10 per cent increase on the previous 12

months.

Mr Hayes said: "For young people in particular these are positive figures at a time when they're facing particular challenges in the labour market. This is very encouraging because it suggests that employers are continuing to use apprenticeships as a means to developing skills and meet their business needs.

"Even in sectors where there's real pressure on employers, apprenticeship numbers are holding up or growing. That is indeed encouraging in terms of what it says about the investment in the future - which essentially is what apprenticeships are all about.

"When employers take on apprentices they're not taking them on for the moment, they're taking them on for the future... and it's very encouraging that this continues to be the case."

Mr Hayes also admitted that the previous government had helped to emphasise the benefits and relevance of apprenticeships.

Mr Hayes said: "It is true the previous government invested in apprenticeships, and it's certainly true that the previous Prime Minister understood the importance of skills in apprenticeships.

"The difference is not about direction of travel, the difference is about the scale and scope of our ambitions. Whereas the previous government supported apprenticeships, we

have put them at the very heart of all we wish to do in respect to skills."

Delegates asked Mr Hayes questions about the marketing budget behind apprenticeships, and whether employers were actually asking for more learners with an Advanced Level Apprenticeship.

The minister was then quickly whisked away before lunch, allowing Sharon Smith and Hugh Joslin, from the University of Greenwich Apprentice Progression Research Project to explain their data.

The research, which tracked the career paths of Advanced Level Apprentices from 2005-06, found that one in eight learners had moved onto a scheme in HE.

The data also showed that Advanced Level Apprenticeships had increased by 37% between 2008/09 and 2009/10.

This rise was attributed in part to the rise in learners aged 25 and above, which had increased by 165% between 2005/06 and 2008/09.

Mr Joslin said: "The research shows a promising rise in the numbers of apprentices progressing to higher education. There is still more to be done however to develop clear work-based learning pathways like Higher Apprenticeships, which can provide alternative routes to degrees and the professions."

The research also found that the number of Advanced Level Apprentices advancing to higher education had increased by 69.5% between 2005/06 and 2008/09.

Geographical differences showed that London accounted for only 6% of all Advanced Level Apprenticeships, while the North West of England came out top with 18%.

**"Apprenticeships have a direct relationship with the nature of the economy and the workforce needed to meet economic need"**

Mr Maguire said: "This is an extraordinary piece of research which shines a light on an important group of students whose abilities, needs and ambitions are not always fully understood.

"Apprenticeships can be a great way for young people to develop the higher level skills that the nation needs. Helping them into higher education demands that universities work in new ways, offering more flexible and part-time courses for example, but our experience indicates that this can reap great rewards in terms of realising the potential of a generation of young people."

The Open University was the most popular



HEFCE funded HE institution for Advanced Level Apprentices, with the University of Teesside and Central Lancashire coming in at second and third respectively.

The research also found that 20% of Advanced Level Apprentices who progress to HE live in disadvantaged areas.

This is in comparison to 15% of all HE learners who come from disadvantaged areas generally.

Afternoon speakers included Adrian Anderson, Chief Executive of the University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC), who discussed the importance of HE/FE partnerships when developing apprenticeship schemes.

Mr Anderson used France as a case study to highlight the role that Advanced Level Apprenticeships could play in England.

Mr Anderson explained that in 2007/08, there were nearly 100,000 Higher Apprenticeship completions out of an approximate 425,000 total apprenticeships in France.

It was suggested that perhaps these

qualifications should have a similar presence in England.

Some remarks were then made by Mr Joslin and Cath Witherington, Team Leader of the Apprenticeships Unit at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) later in the afternoon.

This then led into a panel discussion which allowed delegates to ask the various speakers any questions they had about the current role of Advanced Level Apprenticeships.

The research team at the University of Greenwich hopes to find more funding that will allow them to produce annual updates to their data.

Apprenticeships are increasingly seen as a route not only to vocational skills and a practical profession, but other, perhaps even more beneficial schemes, available both in FE and HE institutions.

If Britain is to create a workforce skilled enough to tackle the increasingly pressurised and competitive marketplace, understanding how learners can get the most out of each educational system is vital.



Attentive crowd at the 'Apprentices and Progression: Policy, Evidence and Practice' conference



Hugh Joslin of the University of Greenwich talks about apprenticeships



John Hayes, Minister FE, Skills and lifelong learning at the conference



Adrian Anderson, chief executive of University Vocational Awards Council



Sharon Smith of the University of Greenwich speaking about apprenticeships



Learning more about progression at University of Greenwich Pictures: Nick Summers



## Press and Public Affairs Manager

c£36,000

### About Pearson:

Pearson (www.pearson.com) offers world class assessment, learning technologies and educational materials. Pearson has a rich heritage in the UK education system through names like Longman, Heinemann, Edexcel and BTEC. From setting and marking millions of exams, to online testing, to services integrating traditional textbooks with engaging software, we are involved in education from primary school through to higher education and professional training and apprenticeships in the workplace. As well as being the world's leading learning company, Pearson also comprises Penguin and the Financial Times Group.

### Scope of the Role:

The Corporate Communications team supports the whole of Pearson's international education business in the delivery of its business strategy, by communicating with key groups including the media, government, policy experts, and our own staff. The Press and Public Affairs Manager will be a key part of Pearson's efforts to lead policy debates that matter to the future of education and skills in the UK.

Reporting to the Head of UK Corporate Affairs, the successful candidate will work with the rest of the Corporate Communications team to raise Pearson's profile and safeguard our reputation for excellence in education.

### The successful applicant will need to have:

- A strong track record of proactive media engagement in policy and issues-based PR, working with national and specialist media (minimum two years experience preferred);
- The ability to develop and manage communications and relationships with media,

policy-makers, government, and other stakeholders around specific issues and campaigns;

- Experience of working with or in PR and communications agencies to achieve results;
- Experience of using social media and digital comms to complement traditional media work; and

Experience in other communications disciplines such as speech-writing, internal communications, or of working in the education sector, would be an advantage.

### Key Accountabilities:

- Develop and implement communications strategies for specific areas of Pearson's UK education business
- Seek proactive and creative opportunities for Pearson to participate in public and media debate
- Build and maintain strong relationships with journalists, stakeholders and other influencers to ensure Pearson is well-represented in media and public discussion
- Act as a source of communications advice to colleagues across Pearson, and in particular to senior managers
- Support Pearson's international education business outside the UK with PR and communications advice.

For further information about the role and how to apply please go to the jobs page at <http://www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs/>

**For an informal conversation about this role, please contact Brendan O'Grady, Head of UK Corporate Affairs, on 020 7190 4146 or email [brendan.ogrady@pearson.com](mailto:brendan.ogrady@pearson.com).**

ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

## Leadership Opportunities at Lancaster & Morecambe College



**Are you seeking a new challenge for your career, and the opportunity to progress your leadership and management skills?** At a challenging time for local business and community, we are seeking 2 exceptional individuals with a range of skills and experience in Further Education and industry training who together will drive forward the breadth and quality of the College's contribution to the local economy through an innovative, high quality learner experience in both college and workplace environment. Our vision of becoming a beacon of vocational excellence is within reach, with success rates in the top 10%, outstanding financial management and an ambitious planned refurbishment programme that will transform facilities and accommodation. We are definitely going places and offer an excellent career opportunity for the successful candidates. Key information about both these posts is available in the vacancies section of our website.

### HEAD OF FACULTY: Service Industries & Business

*Including Hospitality, Tourism, Business, Hair & Beauty, Work-based Learning*  
**Salary £43,124 - £49,204 per annum**  
**37 hours per week**

Lead and manage the Faculty, supporting staff to drive forward curriculum development, student performance, quality assurance and achievement of targets in all areas. Oversee the College's work with employers and apprenticeships.

**Job Ref: MS 581**

### LMC BUSINESS MANAGER

**Salary £36,647 per annum**  
**37 hours per week**

Effectively manage and support a team of sales and admin staff for work-based learning under the 'LMC Business' brand, and co-ordinate employer links and apprenticeships across college programmes, acting as a champion for the College with local employers under the overall direction of the Head of Faculty. **Job Ref: MS 582**

### Closing Date: Friday 18 November 2011

(interviews early - mid December)

For job description and online application please visit [www.lmc.ac.uk](http://www.lmc.ac.uk) or [www.fejobs.com](http://www.fejobs.com), or for a job application pack (various formats) phone 01524 521507 / email [jobs@lmc.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@lmc.ac.uk). All posts are subject to a CRB Disclosure in line with our policy of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.



COLLEGE OF  
NORTH WEST  
LONDON

### ESOL Lecturer

**20,715 – 35,172 p.a. incl LAA**

**ref: 000607**

You will have recent, relevant teaching experience of teaching ESOL to 16 – 18 year olds, an appropriate degree or equivalent, a generic teaching qualification (DTLLS or Cert Ed/PGCE) as well as a subject specific qualification in teaching ESOL: e.g Additional Diploma in Teaching English (ESOL).

**Closing date: 18th November 2011**

**Interview date: 2 December 2011**

**For the full job listing go to the 'Jobs' page at FE Week:**

<http://www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs/view/-esolcollegeNWL>

## More jobs online

For more jobs see our jobs board on the FE Week website:

[www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs](http://www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs)

If you wish to advertise in future editions of the paper, please email enquiries to:

[claire.edwards@feweek.co.uk](mailto:claire.edwards@feweek.co.uk)

For rates see our 'Advertise' section at: [www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk)





CHALLENGING MINDS. INSPIRING SUCCESS.

## Positions Available

### Trainer/Assessor (Hairdressing)

Hours of work: (24 hours per week, 52 weeks per year)

Grade: APTC Scale 5/6, Points 22

**Salary: £28, £12,808 - £15,509 per annum**

### Planning and Funding Team Leader

Grade: APT&amp;C S03

### NVQ/QCF Assessor

Grade: Scale 5/6, points 22 to 28

**Salary: £17,746 to £23,910**

### Supply NVQ/QCF Assessor

Hours of work: Variable hours

Grade: Scale 5/6

**Salary: £11.57 - £14.00 per hour,**

### Assistant Accountant

Grade: APTC Scale 5, points 22 to 25

**Salary: £19,746 - £21,678 per annum**

### Specialist Curriculum Services Advisor

(Moderate Learning Difficulty)

**37 hours per week, 45 weeks per year**

Grade: Scale 6, Points 26 – 28

**Salary: £22,238 - £23,752 per annum**

### Nursery Nurse

Hours of work: (37 hours per week, Maternity Cover)

Grade: NDG1

**Salary: £13,419 – £15,090 per annum**

### Data and Returns Controller

Hours of work: Maternity cover

Grade: APT&amp;C Scale 6

**Salary: £22,386 - £23,910 per annum**

### SpLD/SENCo Lecturer

Grade: Band 3 Qualified Lecturer

**Salary: £27,294 - £32,598 per annum**

### Report Developer and Data Analyst

Grade: S01/S02, points 29 to 34

**Salary: £24,876 to £28,926**

To find see a full job description and find out how to apply visit the 'Jobs' page at:

<http://www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs/>

ENGAGE

ENRICH

ENJOY

With around 1,800 students undertaking a diverse range of studies, we are the largest A-level provider in the county and draw on a wide catchment area. Our size allows us to offer real choice to students, and yet we endeavour to deliver individual care and support to all those who study here. With A level pass rates hitting 99% and 80% of our UCAS applicants going on to higher education, we are proud of what we have achieved in recent years, but we are keen to continue to adapt and to innovate to sustain high standards in competitive times.

Our new Principal will inherit a dedicated and very committed staff group, keen to make their contribution to the future of the college. You will develop and promote a vision for the college that will anticipate and respond to changes in our sector, as well as considering new opportunities for the college, both academic and commercial. We expect you'll be experienced at Deputy level or above, with specific sixth form/tertiary experience. Your strong operational management skills should be enhanced by good strategic awareness, an appetite for change and the capacity to deliver it. Outward looking, you'll be keen to identify opportunities for growth through partnership working, while keeping a strong focus on appropriate internal systems and processes. You should be a team leader and team player in equal measure, ready to lead and motivate from the front, but also ready to devolve and share responsibility, developing talent and capacity within your staff group.



## PRINCIPAL £COMPETITIVE

East Norfolk Sixth Form College has a well-established reputation for academic success and a strong track record in supporting students to recognise, nurture and achieve their potential. It's a place where talent can thrive and where committed and passionate education professionals can really make a difference.

For more information, please visit [www.ensfcprincipal.co.uk](http://www.ensfcprincipal.co.uk) or contact Mike Galloway or Trudy Searle at Navigate on **0844 800 5300**. Closing date: 25 November. Interviews 12 & 13 December.



ENSFC aims to create a caring and diverse working and learning community where every individual is valued and respected.



**EAST NORFOLK**  
Sixth Form College

### Senior Management Information Systems (MIS) Analyst

**Salary:** £23,648 - £27,080**Status:** Permanent**Basis:** 37 hours per week**Benefits:** 22 days holiday per annum + public holidays + Christmas/New Year shut down, Simply Health Cash Plan, contributory pension + other benefits

An excellent opportunity has arisen at Reaseheath College for a Senior MIS Analyst to join the existing MIS team. This new post has been created to take the lead on report production and translation to free capacity at a senior management level to provide more strategic leadership to the College.

The main purpose of the role is to produce accurate MIS reports and then undertake the analysis and translation of them into clear, concise and meaningful business information which can effectively be used throughout the College. The role holder will also need to be able to do this process in

reverse i.e. to understand particular business goals/issues such as student retention and then provide meaningful MI which can be used to address those goals/issues.

The successful applicant will ideally have, among other criteria, relevant professional qualifications and/or equivalent experience including the ability to write SQL queries, views and stored procedures to access data and experience of using SQL Reporting Services and SQL Analysis Services. Knowledge of how funding works within Further Education would also be desirable.

#### How to apply:

To formally apply for this exciting opportunity please complete an application form which can be found on our website [www.reaseheath.ac.uk](http://www.reaseheath.ac.uk) and return it to the Human Resources team via email at [personnel@reaseheath.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@reaseheath.ac.uk). If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the HR Administrators on 01270 613 162/168.

**Closing date: Monday 14th November 2011 at 5pm**

**Assessment Centre: Wednesday 7th December 2011**



**FE Week Celebrity Charity Auction**  
In partnership with Tribal and NCFE on behalf of the Helena Kennedy Foundation

All the proceeds from the FE Week Celebrity Charity Auction will be donated to the Helena Kennedy Foundation. This important national, independent, and educational charity exists to improve life chances for disadvantaged students from the further and adult education sectors by providing bursaries, mentoring, training and support, enabling them to go on to university and move on successfully into graduate professions.

The Helena Kennedy Foundation is the FE Week, Tribal and NCFE's chosen charity in 2011, and this event will round off a year of fundraising in style.

The online auction (see items below) will be open for bids until 6pm on the first night of the annual Association of Colleges conference (15th November 2011), when the exclusive live celebrity auction will take over in the Banqueting Suite at Birmingham's City Hall.

In addition to bidding online, if you would like to attend this glittering event on the 15th November 2011 please find out more and book [here](#) (demand is expected to be high and places are limited, so book early).

Also, if you, your college or your company would like to donate an item to the auction, please [click here](#) to find out how.

Get bidding!

**Current Items**

**Manchester United (Home) vs Liverpool (Away) (Saturday 11th February 2012) Executive Lounge Tickets**

Knights Lounge Package: This Elite package includes:

- North East Quadrant Luxury padded seating
- Three course choice menu
- Half time tea & coffee...more

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# Celebrity Charity Auction

The *FE Week* Celebrity Charity Auction is set to be the biggest night of the FE year, bringing together leaders for some fantastic food, music, fun and fundraising. On the first night of the Association of Colleges' Annual Conference (15th November 2011), we'll be serving up a beautiful three course meal and an elaborate high-profile auction at the Banqueting Suite of Birmingham's City Hall.

All the proceeds from the event will be donated to the Helena Kennedy Foundation, the independent charity dedicated to helping disadvantaged students from the further and higher education sector.

The amazing items being auctioned off include a two night luxury tree house experience, football tickets for Manchester United vs. Liverpool and a Ferrari 360 Modena experience at Silverstone.

All of these once in a lifetime items will be auctioned off by the The Perrier Award winning comedian and broadcaster Simon Fanshawe.

## Everyone can bid NOW online!

The auction has already kicked off online here: <http://www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/auction>, so you can bid online now for items up until 6pm on the 15th November, when the live auction takes over in Birmingham.

## FE Week Sudoku challenge

	3		8		1	6		5
		4	7	2				
1		8			4			
			5		9	7		1
			1	8	6			
4		6	2		7			
			4			8		6
				7	3	2		
6		7	9		8		1	

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

1				2			8	
6				4				9
				7			4	6
	2				4		5	
		1				7		
	9		6				2	
9	5			3				
2				9				8
	7			6				5

Difficulty:  
**HARD**

Let's play: We have shaded 3 squares on this sudoku grid. Complete the puzzle and rearrange the numbers to make an FE Association.

Email your entries to: [competitions@feweek.co.uk](mailto:competitions@feweek.co.uk)  
The winner will receive an FE Week mug!

## Last Week's solutions

3	6	2	8	5	7	1	9	4
5	1	7	2	9	4	6	8	3
4	9	8	3	1	6	2	7	5
7	4	6	5	3	8	9	1	2
1	2	5	7	6	9	3	4	8
8	3	9	4	2	1	7	5	6
9	8	1	6	4	3	5	2	7
6	5	4	1	7	2	8	3	9
2	7	3	9	8	5	4	6	1

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

4	2	5	3	1	6	7	8	9
9	7	6	4	5	8	3	2	1
1	3	8	7	9	2	5	6	4
5	4	9	8	6	3	1	7	2
7	6	2	5	4	1	9	3	8
3	8	1	9	2	7	4	5	6
6	5	3	1	8	9	2	4	7
2	9	7	6	3	4	8	1	5
8	1	4	2	7	5	6	9	3

Difficulty: **HARD**  
Famous year: 1914 - The year WWI started

## FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!

*"Mostly this week I have been facing forward in my new car seat"*

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter [@daniellinford](https://twitter.com/daniellinford)

